

**MALAYSIAN EMPLOYERS'
ATTITUDES TOWARD
HIRING PERSONS WITH
DISABILITIES**

ZULFIKRI OSMAN

**UNIVERSITI UTARA MALAYSIA
2003**



Sekolah Siswazah
(Graduate School)
Universiti Utara Malaysia

PERAKUAN KERJA KERTAS PROJEK
(Certification of Project Paper)

Saya, yang bertandatangan, memperakukan bahawa
(I, the undersigned, certify that)

ZULFIKRI BIN OSMAN

calon untuk Ijazah Master of Science (Management)
(candidate for the degree of)

telah mengemukakan kertas projek yang bertajuk
(has presented his/her project paper of the following title)


MALAYSIAN EMPLOYERS' ATTITUDES TOWARD HIRING PERSONS

WITH DISABILITIES

seperti yang tercatat di muka surat tajuk dan kulit kertas projek
(as it appears on the title page and front cover of project paper)

bahawa kertas projek tersebut boleh diterima dari segi bentuk serta kandungan dan meliputi bidang ilmu dengan memuaskan.
(that the project paper acceptable in form and content and that a satisfactory knowledge of the field is covered by the project paper).

Nama Penyelia : Prof. Dr. Juhary Ali
(Name of Supervisor)

Tandatangan : 
(Signature)

Tarikh : 30 DEC 2003
(Date)

MALAYSIAN EMPLOYERS' ATTITUDES TOWARD HIRING PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

A thesis submitted to the Academic Affairs
Department in partial fulfillment of the requirement for
the degree Masters of Science (Management)
Universiti Utara Malaysia

By:
Zulfikri Osman

December 2003
©Zulfikri Osman, 2003: All rights reserved

PERMISSION TO USE

In presenting this thesis in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a postgraduate degree from Universiti Utara Malaysia, I agree that University Library may make it freely available for inspection. I further agree that permission for copying this thesis in any manner, in whole or in part, for scholarly purposes may be granted by my supervisor or, in their absence, by the dean of the Academic Affairs Department. It is understood that any copying or publication or use of this thesis or part thereof for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission. It is also understood that due recognition shall be given to me and to Universiti Utara Malaysia for any scholarly use which may be made of any material from my thesis. Requests for permission to copy or to make other use of material in this thesis, in whole or in part, should be addressed to:

Dean of Academic Affairs Department

Universiti Utara Malaysia

06010 Sintok

Kedah Darul Aman

Malaysia

Acknowledgment

I would like to express my highest gratitude to a number of people in a way or another who had cordially been giving a handful of assistance and cooperation in preparing this project.

To those who had rendered their individual help in making it possible for me to carry out this project and in the compilation of this report, I extend my grateful and thanks.

To my advisor, Prof. Dr. Juhary Ali, whom without his inspiration and guidance, this project would not be possible, I therefore would like to express my appreciation and gratitude.

To my family, I also like to express my deepest appreciation for being supportive in making this project a reality.

Zulfikri

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|------|
| Acknowledgment | iv |
| Table of Contents..... | v |
| List of Figures | vii |
| List of Tables | viii |
| Abstract | ix |
| 1 INTRODUCTION..... | 1 |
| 1.1 Statement of the Problem | 1 |
| 1.2 Statement of the Purpose | 5 |
| 1.2.1 Hypothesis 1..... | 7 |
| 1.2.2 Hypothesis 2..... | 7 |
| 1.2.3 Hypothesis 3..... | 8 |
| 1.3 Significance of the Study..... | 8 |
| 2 LITERATURE REVIEW..... | 9 |
| 2.1 Background of the Study | 9 |
| 2.2 Attitude | 10 |
| 2.3 Disability | 12 |
| 2.4 Dimensions of Employer Attitude Survey..... | 13 |
| 2.5 HR Policies | 14 |
| 2.6 Productivity | 14 |
| 2.7 Training and Development | 15 |
| 2.8 Workplace Environment..... | 15 |
| 2.9 Pay | 16 |
| 2.10 Benefits..... | 17 |
| 2.11 Company Culture..... | 17 |
| 2.12 Affirmative Action Programs | 18 |
| 2.12.1 Studies Indicating Positive Employer Attitudes | 19 |
| 2.12.2 Studies Indicating Negative Employer Attitudes..... | 20 |
| 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY..... | 22 |
| 3.1 Nature of Study..... | 22 |
| 3.2 Data Collection Techniques..... | 22 |
| 3.2.1 Types of Data..... | 22 |
| 3.2.2 Research Instrument and Administration..... | 23 |

| | | |
|---------|--|----|
| 3.2.3 | Population, Sampling Procedures, Technique and Sample Size. | 23 |
| 3.2.4 | Rationale for the Systematic Sampling Technique and its Operation..... | 24 |
| 3.2.5 | Data Collection Process | 25 |
| 3.3 | Reliability Tests of Questionnaires..... | 26 |
| 3.3.1 | Training & Development Policies | 26 |
| 3.3.2 | Workplace Environment | 27 |
| 3.3.3 | Legal & Ethics | 27 |
| 3.3.4 | Employers' Attitudes | 28 |
| 4 | Findings and Analyses | 29 |
| 4.1 | Univariate Analyses..... | 29 |
| 4.1.1 | Population background | 29 |
| 4.1.2 | Opinions & Perceptions | 31 |
| 4.1.2.1 | Training & Development Policies | 31 |
| 4.1.2.2 | Workplace Environments | 32 |
| 4.1.2.3 | Legal & Ethics | 32 |
| 4.1.2.4 | Employers' Attitude | 33 |
| 4.2 | Bivariate Analyses..... | 35 |
| 4.2.1 | Crosstabs..... | 35 |
| 4.2.1.1 | A1 v A2 | 35 |
| 4.2.1.2 | A1 v A3 | 35 |
| 4.2.1.3 | A2 v A3 | 36 |
| 4.2.2 | Correlations..... | 37 |
| 4.2.3 | Tests of Significance..... | 38 |
| 4.2.3.1 | Hypothesis 1 | 38 |
| 4.2.3.2 | Hypothesis 2 | 39 |
| 4.2.3.3 | Hypothesis 3 | 39 |
| 5 | Conclusion Drawn and Recommendations | 41 |
| 5.1 | Recommendations | 45 |
| | Bibliography | 46 |
| | Appendix 1: Research Instrument..... | 49 |
| | Appendix 2: Result of Pilot Testing..... | 54 |
| | Appendix 3: SPSS Printouts | 61 |

List of Figures

| | |
|--|----|
| Figure 1: Illustration of the Theoretical Framework..... | 7 |
| Figure 2: Pie-Chart breakdown of Organizational Classification..... | 29 |
| Figure 3: Pie-Chart breakdown of Experience in Hiring Disabled Workers.. | 30 |
| Figure 4: Pie-Chart breakdown between Those organisations currently Hiring and None | 31 |

List of Tables

| | |
|--|----|
| Table 1: A 1 Organizational Classification | 29 |
| Table 2: A 2 Experience in Hiring Disabled Workers..... | 30 |
| Table 3: A 3 Current Employment of Disabled Worker Situation | 30 |
| Table 4: Crosstab between A1 v A2..... | 35 |
| Table 5: Crosstab between A1 v A3..... | 36 |
| Table 6: Crosstab between A2 v A3..... | 36 |
| Table 7:Correlation of Coefficients..... | 37 |

Abstract

Like everyone else, disabled people have natural rights. The rights to be employed, to have better life and income, and together contributing in developing their nation. However, many people with disabilities are still struggling to enter the labor market. Notwithstanding, Malaysian employers are found to be discriminative in hiring disabled workers. Presently, jobs offered to disabled workers are also normally for lower position. The Ministry of National Unity and Social Development through its working group on legislation had drafted a proposed Act to be called the Person with Disabilities Act. However, these federal initiatives, as important as they are, have not changed the way many employers feel about hiring the disabled people. The purpose of this study is to investigate the attitudes and perceptions of Malaysian employers toward hiring people with disabilities. The study postulates, among others, that an organization's training and development policy can give an idea, if not a total picture, of its attitude towards disabled people. It is acknowledged that policies, being major organizational documents, are usually well thought out prior to publication and enforcement. Hence, the blueprint should enable outsiders to gauge the commitment and conviction an organization's management has. This should in turn reflect on its overall attitude. On the other hand, an organization unique workplace environment is generally designed and constructed with a certain purpose in mind. The final condition of a working environment depends a lot on physical infrastructure apart from manpower infrastructure. It has been suggested that the intention of the owner, designer and organization had been incorporated at the planning stage. Hence, whether the issue of providing a conducive environment to human in general and unfortunate human specifically should have been forethought. It is realized that the situation and condition of the workplace would also reflect an organization attitude towards disabled people. Lastly, the legal and ethical environment an organization operates in, is indeed influential on its attitude towards disabled people. The study also found that, those surveyed perceived their organizations had been unfair in offering jobs while at the same time do not provide special training programs tailored for disabled workers. On the positive side though, organizations gave the same benefits and salary schemes, equal opportunity for advancement and are socially responsible in term of employment opportunity given to disabled workers. However, employers do not really care about disabled people involvement in nation building! Moreover,

organizations seemed to prefer 'normal' prospective employees, during selection and recruitment, to disabled people. The cross tabulations revealed that the private sector's employment of disabled workers declined sharply. The three hypotheses were then tested and found that training and development policy and the legal and ethical environment were proven to have significant relationships with employers' attitude individually. However, an organization unique workplace environment was not. Although the strengths of each relationship were not established the significance of two out of three, are thought to be good for future research and prediction on employers' attitude. In conclusion, it is proposed that a further research be conducted, to find out the exact nature of the declining trend in hiring disabled workers. Finally, the findings raised the need for a review of existing legal provisions to ensure equal employment opportunity for all.

Abstrak

Seperti mana individu yang lain, Orang Kurang Upaya (OKU), seharusnya mempunyai hak-hak asasi. Hak-hak seperti hak untuk mendapatkan pekerjaan, kehidupan dan pendapatan yang lebih baik serta hak untuk sama-sama menyumbang ke arah pembangunan sesebuah negara. Walau bagaimana pun, masih ramai OKU yang berhempas pulas untuk memasuki pasaran pekerjaan. Akan tetapi, para majikan di Malaysia dilihat mengamalkan diskriminasi dalam pengambilan pekerja membabitkan OKU. Kelazimannya, jawatan yang ditawarkan kepada OKU pada masa kini biasanya merupakan jawatan peringkat rendah. Kementerian Perpaduan Negara dan Pembangunan Sosial melalui satu jawatankuasa kerja telah mencadangkan suatu Akta yang akan dikenali sebagai Akta Orang Kurang Upaya. Walau bagaimana pun, inisiatif ini tidak dapat mengubah persepsi majikan di negara ini dalam pengambilan OKU bekerja. Kajian ini bertujuan untuk menyiasat atitud dan persepsi majikan-majikan di Malaysia terhadap pengambilan pekerja di kalangan OKU. Kajian ini mengandaikan antara lain bahawa polisi latihan dan pembangunan pekerja akan dapat memberikan ide, jika tidak secara keseluruhan pun, mengenai atitud terhadap OKU. Adalah juga dipercayai bahawa polisi merupakan suatu dokumen penting organisasi, biasanya disediakan dan diwartakan setelah satu pertimbangan mendalam dilakukan. Maka dengan itu, 'blueprint' tersebut seharusnya dapat memberi gambaran kepada masyarakat berkaitan komitmen pihak pengurusan sesebuah organisasi. Selain daripada itu, rekabentuk persekitaran tempat kerja biasanya dibangunkan berdasarkan sesuatu tujuan. Persekitaran tempat kerja juga sangat bergantung kepada infrastruktur fizikal, selain struktur sumber manusia. Pada peringkat perancangan sesebuah organisasi, matlamat pemilik, juru rekabentuk dan arah tuju organisasi adalah digabungkan. Oleh yang demikian, isu sama ada suatu persekitaran kerja yang kondusif disediakan untuk pekerja secara umumnya, mahupun khusus bagi OKU, seharusnya telah difikirkan sejak dari awal. Adalah dipercayai bahawa situasi dan persekitaran tempat kerja akan turut mempengaruhi atitud organisasi terhadap OKU. Kajian ini juga mendapati organisasi tidak berlaku adil dalam menawarkan pekerjaan dan dalam masa yang sama tidak memperuntukkan program latihan khas yang sesuai untuk golongan OKU. Walau bagaimana pun, sesuatu yang agak positif ialah organisasi-organisasi memberikan kemudahan, skim gaji, dan peluang kenaikan pangkat yang sama kepada semua pekerja-pekerja.

Sungguhpun begitu, para majikan tidak begitu mengambil berat tentang keterlibatan golongan OKU dalam pembangunan negara. Tambahan pula organisasi lebih berminat terhadap calon pekerja yang 'normal' berbanding dengan golongan kurang upaya semasa pemilihan dan pengambilan pekerja. Ujian tabulasi silang mendapati bahawa pengambilan pekerja OKU di dalam sektor swasta menurun secara mendadak. Ketiga-tiga hipotesis kemudiannya diuji. Hasilnya, polisi latihan serta pembangunan pekerja dan persekitaran perundangan dan etika mempunyai hubungan yang signifikan dengan atitud majikan. Akan tetapi, situasi persekitaran tempat kerja adalah didapati tidak signifikan. Biar pun kekuatan korelasi antara pembolehubah tidak dibuktikan, tahap signifikaniti dua dari tiga hubungan pembolehubah adalah dianggap baik bagi tujuan kajian-kajian di masa hadapan serta bagi meramal atitud para majikan. Sebagai kesimpulan, adalah dicadangkan bahawa kajian selanjutnya dilakukan bagi mengenalpasti sebab sebenar penurunan dalam pengambilan pekerja OKU. Akhirnya, penemuan-penemuan dalam kajian ini meningkatkan keperluan bagi suatu semakan semula peruntukan undang-undang sedia ada untuk memastikan peluang pekerjaan yang sama rata kepada semua.

Chapter One

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Even though they have rights to be employed, to have better life and income, and together contributing in developing their nation, many people with disabilities are still struggling to enter the labor market. In the United States, approximately 54 million non-institutionalized Americans have physical, intellectual, or psychiatric disabilities. Of these cases, 26 million are classified as having a severe disability. Severe disabilities include Alzheimer's disease, autism, mental retardation, and long-term use of cane, crutches, walker, or wheelchair. Historically, individuals with disabilities have not fared well in the US labor force (Braddock & Bachelder, 1994). Census figures indicate that of the 15.6 millions working-age adults with disabilities (age 16-64), only 34.6% were employed.

In Malaysia, currently there are only 3,870 workers with disabilities were successful for job placement. This figure is very much smaller compared to 122,543 registered people with disabilities as at June 2003, reported by the Department of Social Welfare.

The contents of
the thesis is for
internal user
only

Bibliography

Antonak, R.F. (1982). Development and psychometric analysis of the Scale of Attitudes Towards Disabled Persons. *Journal of Applied Rehabilitation Counseling*, 13, 22-29.

Black, J. S. and Porter, L. W. (2000). *Management: Meeting New Challenges*. 1st ed., Prentice hall Inc., New Jersey.

Braddock, D. and Bachelder, L. (1994). *The Glass Ceiling and Persons with Disabilities*. Chicago, IL: University of Illinois at Chicago, Institute on Disability and human Development

Christman, L.A. and Slaten, B.L. (1991). Attitudes toward people with disabilities and judgements of employment potential. *Perceptual and Motor Skills*, 72, 467-475.

Collins, H. (1995). *Equality In The Workplace: An equal opportunities handbook for trainers*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford.

Ehrhart, L.M. (1995). A national study of employers' attitudes toward persons with disabilities (Doctoral dissertation, Virginia Commonwealth University, 1994). *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 55, 1802.

Gatewood, R.D. and Field, H.S. (2001). *Human Resource Selection*, 5th ed., Harcourt College Publishers, Orlando.

Gay, L. R. and Diehl, P. L. (1992). *Research Methods for Business and Management*. Macmillan Publishing Company, New York, p.140.

Gilbride, D. and Stensrud, R. (1993). Challenges and opportunities for rehabilitation counselors in the Americans with Disabilities Act era. *NARPPS Journal*, 8(2), 67-74.

Hopkins, K.R., Nestleroth, S.L., Bolick, C. (1991). *Help Wanted: How companies can survive and thrive in the coming worker shortage*, McGraw-Hill, New York.

Johnson, V.A., Greenwood, R. and Schriener, K.F. (1998). Work performance and work personality: Employer concerns about workers with disabilities. *Rehabilitation Counseling Bulletin*, 32, 50-57.

Kotler, P. and G. Armstrong (1989). *Principles of Marketing*. 4th ed., Prentice Hall, New Jersey, p. 104.

Kregel, J. and Tomiyasu, Y. (1994). Employers' attitudes toward workers with disabilities: Effect of the Americans with Disabilities Act. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*, 4, 165-173.

Kregel, J. and Unger, D. (1993). Employer perceptions of work potential of individuals with disabilities: An illustration from supported employment. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*, 3, 17-25.

Kumpulan Wang Simpanan Pekerja: 2002 Annual Report

Martin, T.N. and Viecegli, L. (1998). The business of rehabilitation placement: What to understand about private employers before approaching them. *Journal of Rehabilitation*, 54(4), 49-55.

McFarlin, D.B., Song, J. and Sonntag, M. (1991). Integrating the disabled into the workforce: A survey of Fortune 500 company attitudes and practices. *Employee Responsibilities and Rights Journal*, 4, 107-123.

Mueller, Daniel, J. (1986). *Measuring Social Attitude*. Teacher College Press.

Noe, R.A., Hollenbeck, J.R., Gerhart, B., Wright, P.M. (2003). Human Resource Management: Gaining a competitive advantage, 4th ed., McGraw-Hill, New York.

Olson, J.M. and Zanna, M.P. (1993). Attitudes and attitude change. Annual Review of Psychology. 44, 117-154.

Schiffman, L.G., Kanuk, L.L. (1994). Consumer Behavior, 5th ed., Prentice Hall, New Jersey.

Sekaran, U. (2000). Research Methods for Business: A Skill Building Approach, 3rd ed., John Wiley & Sons, New York.

Tobias, D.L. (1990). Attitudes of employers in manufacturing toward hiring the handicapped (Doctoral dissertation, Boston College, 1989). Dissertation Abstracts International, 50, 1904.

Weisenstein, G.R. and Koshman, H.L. (1991). The influence of being labeled handicapped on employer perceptions of the importance of worker traits for successful employment. Career Development for Exceptional Individuals, 14, 67-76.

Wright, G.E. and Multon, K.D. (1995). Employers' perceptions of nonverbal communication in job interviews for persons with physical disabilities. Journal of Vocational Behavior, 47, 214-227.

Yuker, H.E., Block, J.R. and Campbell, W. (1960). A scale to measure attitudes toward disabled persons. Human Resources Study No.5. Albertson, New York: Human Resource Foundation.

Websites references

<http://www.blogspot/budget2004>

<http://www.jkm.gov.my>